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Main works-

A saga of Sacrifices: Praja Parishad Movement in J&K

100 Documents: A reference book J&K, Mission Accomplished

A Compendium of Icons of Jammu & Kashmir & our Inspiration (English)

Jammu Kashmir ki Sangarsh Gatha (Hindi)

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FILE NO: 54

The Dokhyas (June 1987)

The Dogras (Sept 86)

The Kashmiri Pandit (April 1987)

First War of Indian Freedom - 1857 (Jammu's Traditions Role)

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## THE DOKHPAS

## Abstract

The community is known as Dokhpa or Brokhpa meaning people of the meadow. They are the direct descendants of Dards and have migrated from Gilgit. History of their migration is preserved in their folk literature. They are agriculturists inhabiting the villages of Da, Hanu, Darchik and Garkun on or around the banks of river Indus. They speak in Droskhat among themselves and use Ladakhi with outsiders. They fall under the Backward Classes in Jammu and Kashmir State. They wear head-gear and gown. The former is decorated with flowers, beads, needles, ribbons and buttons. Both men and women are specially fond of flowers. Women arrange their hair in a large number of plaits while the traditionally men shave the frontal portion of the head and have a long tail of hair hanging on the back. men and women cover their backs with goat skin, keeping the fur inside. Sattu (roasted barley flour) is their staple cereal. They are very fond of local alcoholic drink (chang). Beef, cow's milk and its products, poultry birds and eggs are strictly prohibited. Gur-gur tea is their favourite drink.

There is no caste hierarchy. Relations between people are cordial and good. People follow endogamy. Monogamy, polygyny and fraternal polyandry are in vogue. Residence is patrilocal after marriage. Marriages are arranged and solemnized only after boy and girl attain puberty. Remarriage and divorce is permissible. Families are joint. Relations among members are cordial. Eldest brother in a polyandrous family is known as the father of children. Women work in all socio-economic spheres but they do not enjoy a equal status with men in economic matters. Marriages are arranged. Commitments are made at a very early age. Marriage ceremonies are conducted by a Lama at bride's place. Consummation of marriage takes place at husband's place. Lama is called in immediately after somebody's death. He lights a candle besides the dead body and starts reciting hymns. The day, date and time of cremation is decided by the Lama. The dead body is cremated in a sleeping posture. A member of one's own clan (phaspoon) lights the funeral pyre. Remains of the bones and ashes are buried.

People are engaged in agriculture. they have two crops in a year. Their main crops are barley millets and buck wheat. Cash crops are grapes, apricots and tomatoes. They grow willows and poplar trees for fire-wood. They rear sheep and goat also. Rearing of cows and poultry birds is believed to be offensive for



their deities. Artisans and craftsmen are conspicuously absent in the community. Village head-man (Mokdam) is the only authority in the village. He is the man to play the role of judge and a leader in the village. They are Buddhists. The gods worshipped by them are La, Dogla and Sapdak. They do not take cow's milk, beef and poultry products. They offer animal sacrifices to please their gods. They have an animistic belief in demons also.

They have no restriction on accepting food, raw or cooked from members of other communities. They do not marry in other communities. Inter-community relations are cordial. The community is not socially and economically advanced. They have not been able to adopt modern professions for lack of necessary training and skill. Conditions of schools in these village is deplorable. Very few children attend these schools.

They are not conscious of benefits of saving. Modern improved varieties of seeds and fertilizers are used. Provisions are distributed through public distribution system. There are no arrangements for providing people with drinking water and electricity.

Place: Ladakh

Date : June, 1987

Md. Iqbal Nazki



## THE MORAVIAN

## Abstract:

The emergence of Moravian Christians or Mashikapa in Ladakh is a recent phenomenon. The first Moravian Mission started functioning at Leh since 1885. The first of converts at Leh, Elijah Chetan Punchok, belonged to the aristocracy of Sabu. Presently, majority of Moravians live at Leh. No official population figure is available. The Moravians speak in Ladakhi amongst themselves and in English and Urdu with others. They use bodhi scripts but correspond in Roman script with the outsiders. No constitutional status is conferred on them. Bio-anthropological information is lacking. They are non-vegetarian and eat yak-beef. Wheat and barley are staple cereal mustard oil is the cooking medium, green vegetables supplement their food. Apples and apricots are consumed in moderation. Gur-gur cha and lipton-cha are consumed round the clock chang and arrakh are main alcoholic drinks. Special cakes and biscuits are baked at Christmas and Easter. Food items considered luxurious in the past such as sweetened tea (lipton-cha) and rice are now commonly used owing to their easy availability. Young ones donot enjoy eating the traditional skiu but prefer rice.

They are hierarchically arranged into skootak (aristocracy), mangriks or yengbadpa (farmers) and riknun (occupational groups) but most of the Moravians belong to the middle order of the hierarchy i.e. mangriks. They have only a diluted concept of social differentiation avoiding connubial and commensal interaction with lower occupational groups. Titles used earlier have been replaced by Christianised titles. The community percieves a middle rank but they are unaware of the Varna order. Monogamy has replaced Polyandry. Marriage alliance with Father's Brother's daughter, Mo Si Da, Wife's sister, and Hu Br are not permissible. Cross cousin marriages are allowed. Marriage by service (magpa), and by courtship and clandestine marriages (skus khoyangches) are usual modes. Married women put on sulma skirts. Now dowry and bride price are demanded. Residence is patrilocal after marriage. No case of divorce is reported. Bigamy is prohibited; remarriage is permissible. No changes were reported in rules of marriage. Age at marriage is above 20 years. Extended families are slowly breaking up and nuclear families are emerging. Elders are given due regard: smoking, drinking and excesssive talking are avoided in their presence. The youngster always concede to the wishes of the elders. Joking and avoidance are absent. Close interfamily linkages in terms of rendering of reciprocal labour, and mutual economic exchanges portaray them as a close-knit community. Pirmogeniture is not strictly adhered to



but the eldest male issue succeeds his father. Fresh employment avenues and greater mobility made the youngsters to be assertive in family matters causing a decline in the absolute authority of the family head. Women have a right in the parental property and play an effective role in family management, affairs of the Church and the community. They contribute substantially to the family earnings and enjoy a high status in the society. Child birth either takes place at in the father's house or in a maternity hospital. Baptization commences after seven month; naming sans ceremony is done by the parents. Moondan and circumcision are not in vogue. At the age of 13 years children are imparted religious education and are confirmed as the full-fledged members of the Church being entitled to participate in Holy Communion, held once in a month\* and at the Last Supper. Marriages take place during day time at the Church where the Pastor confirms marital union of the intending spouses. Wedding rings are exchanged and feasting follows. Consummation of marriage takes place at the husbands residence. The dead are kept for twenty four hours to ascertain death. They body is given a ceremonial bath and buried in a cemetery. No changes were reported in life cycle rituals.

They are a land owning community and are primarily agriculturists. Individuals hold the land ownership titles. Government service trade, and self employment activities are secondary occupations. Market is fully regulated and the community's dependence on it is absolute. Payment to labourers is made in both in cash and kind. No bonded or child labour exists. There has been a resurgence in economy and new job avenues have been opened after independence and specially after Chinese aggression. The Church plays a significant role in exercising political control over the community through the Church Eldre's council (garnme) where all disputes of personal as well as of collective nature and the necessary measures for community welfare are thoroughly discussed. The five Church Elders are elected by vote. The garnme is not authorised to impose any social sanctions. Statutory panchayats have no significant part to play in the affairs of the community. No changes were reported in the mechanism of political control. The Moravian christians are protestants and believe in the edicts of New Testament. There are no family, clan and village deities. Church is the place of worship+ and Jesus Christ is the main god. The shrines are situated within the state of Jammu and Kashmir and outside too but they do not possess the tradition of making pilgrimages. Pastor is a sacred specialist who plays an important role in the life of believers right from baptism to burial. He also presides over the conclaves held to discuss the overall welfare of the community. Christmas and Easter are the major festivals. The people still bear on overall cultural milieu of Laddakhi Buddhist but they neither share the Buddhist faith nor any vestige of the old faith persist amongst them. They have brought about revolutionary changes not only in their own community but in the whole of Ladakh. They were first to introduce smokeless steel ovens, start a Mission Hospital and run



a Mission Public School at Leh. No changes were recently reported either in religious behaviour or organisation. No semblance or art, plastic or graphic, was found. Handicrafts are absent excepting some young girls doing a little bit of embroidery. They are however, well versed with Christian oral traditions and Choral hymns sung at the Church during periodic services.

The people are closely linked with the Buddhists, Muslim Argons and other occupational groups with the ties of economic cooperation and by a fuller participation in other socio-economic activities occurring around. They do not observe any taboos either with the Buddhists or with Argons but avoid to interact with Gara, Beda and Mons. Marriages are performed only with the believers irrespective of ethnic identity. Access is free to places of public interest, and water resources Jajmani system (lasna) no more exists but share cropping (shus) is still a source of interethnic interaction.

People's attitude towards development programmes is enthusiastic; they are against small family norms. Schemes of employment and self employment are fully available of the use all modern media of communication besides making efforts in conservation of environment and harnessing solar energy for self consumption. Kuhls supply water for irrigation, and fertilisers both organic and chemical are fully made use of. Programmes on nutrition have been affectively introduced and well received. Public distribution system is effective enough to take care of people's needs. Banking facilities are fully availed and there is a healthy trend among the people to save and reinvest their savings in more profitable economic pursuits.

Place : Leh

Date : Oct., 1987

B.R. Rizvi







## THE BEDA

## Abstract:

The Beda are musicians. They are sedantry as well as nomadic. The latter earn their livelihood through musical performances including playing flute and drums; and they are scattered around Ladakh having one or two households in each village. There are no synonyms or titles. Their habitat is a region of cold desert at a high altitude and a heavy snow fall. They speak in Ladakhi. The script used is Bodhi and Arabic and dress is similar to other Ladakhi consisting of goncha, shakten, sherak and long boots made of leather or wool. Like other Ladakhis the Beda have prominent cheek bones, broad and flat faces. Bio-anthropological information is not available. Bedas are non-vegetarian and eat beef; wheat and grm (naked barley) are staple cereals. Rice is now becoming popular in their diet. Chang (barley beer) and gur-gur (salty tea) are their favourite drinks.

They are divided into exogamous gyuts or rigs members of which trace their descent from a common ancestor. The relationship with the members of the gyut group are recognised upto four phuds (generations). Thereafter the members of the gyut or rig can marry among themselves. The families are welded into phasphun to render help to each other at the time of birth, marriage and death. The members of phasphun worship the same god or goddesses, kept in the Hemis gumpa. Unlike the phasphun of the Ladakhis, the Beda phasphun are very limited as there are only one or two Beda family in each village. The differentiation among the communities are due to education, occupation, territory, religion and other socioeconomic conditions. They are endogamous but in few cases Beda girls have married with the Muslim Bedas. But such alliances have no background of any regular marriage performances. Consanguinity is absent. Sororate is allowed in case of death of the first wife. Senior levirate is not practised. Adult marriage is the rule. The modes of acquiring mates are bagma (wife goes to live with her husband), magpa (husband goes to live at the house of his wife), elopment, Chabdeb (exchange of sisters), negotiation and by courtship. Monogamy is the usual form. Fraternal polyandry was prevalent in the past but now it does not exist. Married women wear goncha and firoza (scarf). Bride-price is paid while negotiating marriage. Dowry is however paid after the consummation of marriage. Rule of residence is patrilocal but in case of magpa it is uxorilocal. A married son establishes his separate household but continues to fulfil his duties obligations towards his parents. Divorce is permissible and irrevocable.



whereas separation and desertion are revocable. The lhüksang (divorce compensation) is paid by either party. Widow, widower, divorcee remarriages are possible. Changes observed in the institution of marriage are the absence of polyandry, decline in the incidence of divorce and absence of phorsak (keeping additional husband). Families are of mixed extended type. Couples have a large number of children varying from four to fourteen. Inter-personal relations are based on mutual respect. Eldest son used to inherit property. But now rule of equigeniture is followed. Succession is in the male line. Inter-family linkages are based on inter dependence. Families living in Leh town are nuclear. Women enjoy a great deal of freedom because of the institution of polyandry. A girl is cherished as she brings the brides price. Women contribute to the family income and do other household chores. On child birth they observe laf-tsang (after one month) and ralchang (hair saving) etc. The bride groom does not accompany the marriage procession to the bride's house. Only the Nyopa (a representative of the bride groom) goes to the house of the bride and brings her along in a procession to the house of the bride groom for marriage where a feast is hosted after marriage. They cremate dead. The rituals stand curtailed.

They are landless and are not allowed to own land by the higher castes. Besides serving the clients at festive occasions they are engaged as wage labour, in service and self-employment. The nomadic Beda earn their livelihood by begging and giving musical performances. They are paid both in cash and kind. The youngsters among the sedantry section do not like to follow their traditional occupation and prefer to join some service. They have neither any traditional caste council of their own nor hold any position of authority in the statutory panchayat. They do not hold any position in the village and have to obey the dictates of the high caste Ladakhis. In case of non-compliance they are declared melam chhulam thereby stopping the exchange of water and fire) with the other Ladakhis. Bedas are buddhist by religion. A small section of the Bedas living in Nubra valley are Muslim. They though participate in budh purnima, Losar etc; have access to the Gompa and receive the services of Lama on the occasion of birth, marriage and death. Their art and craft are preserved in the gompa. Their folk songs are sung both by men and woman.

They interact with the Mon, Gara, Balti, Argon and the Ladakhis (Bhotos) by way giving musical performances. They serve Muslim Argons and Baltis also. They accept water and kucca and pucca food from all but other communities do not accept water and food from them. There are no doctors, engineers and other white collar functionaries in the community.

They have been benefitted by the development programmes. Under the 20 point programme about 20 houses have been built for



them. They avail educational and medicare facilities in urban areas but in villages their children are discouraged from attending schools. Pipe water and electricity is available to the settled section. The nomadic ones continue to live without such facilities.

Place : Leh

Date : July/August 1987

P.N. Lal



## THE DOGRA BRAHMINS

## Abstract:

The Community's self-identity is Brahmins and they are called by other communities by the same nomenclature. It has synonyms like Pandit/pant, Purohit and Sharma. They are divided into several exogamous sub-groups or gots. Of these Razdan, Kak, Raina, Kashmiri Pant are immigrants from Kashmir, Sathe and Dubdube from Maharashtra, Srivasts (Shrivastav), Dubey, Padhe from U.P., Gaud from West Bengal and they have retained the specific customs of their main group. They speak Dogri amongst themselves. It has its own script known as "Dogre-Akkhar" derived from Takri but now two scripts Devanagiri and Arabic are in use. Their traditional dress was dhoti and a loose Kurta, a long Waist-coat and turban-usually dyed lemon (sandali) or pink (piajee). Brahmins rarely moved bareheaded. Dogra women would wear colourful Churidar tight-Dogra-Pajama (sutthan), Knee-deep shirt and a dupatta. No bio-anthropological information is available. They were strictly vegetarian in the past and were generally taking cereals as their staple food, but after 1947, changes in their food-habits have taken place. Now the younger generation takes non-vegetarian food. Females too have started taking non-vegetarian food. However, they abstain from non-vegetarian food on special days like Tuesdays, Navratras, Shradhs, Samkrantis, full-dark days, ashtamis and ekadashis etc. The people are non-alcoholic. Their favourite drinks are milk, sharbat, buttermilk and lassi and sattu (a mixture of parched barley flour mixed with sweetened water).

The Brahmins are a highly stratified community at the top of which stands those clans who claim descent from King Porus such as Datta, Bali, Vaid etc. and consider themselves as superior Brahmins and rarely volunteered for inter-marriage with other Brahmins. Second in hierarchy is the Pandit class. These two prominent strata were further subdivided into number of gots. One of the dividing factors was the handling of plough. Those who practised agriculture called halbaha and the high class Brahmins did not share pangat (seat) with them. They are monogamous and endogamous but marry outside their own gots. Inter-marriage is permissible with those having the same Rishi - gotra; the got of mothers parents is not permitted. Child marriage was in vogue, perhaps because of the easy availability of the match on one hand and on the second hand it was considered as an act of religious merit (dam dharm Karaj). Batta satta or marriage by exchange involving two or three families, and marriage by purchase was prevalent in the low class Brahmins of the hilly regions. Widow remarriage was totally absent in the community. Akha, thakha and



tikka ceremonies preceded the biah (marriage) which was followed by raphera or daphera. Dowry has been in vogue. Family is headed by the grand-father and if he is not alive then by the father. Property is equally divided amongst all the sons. All the members of the family are given reverence and affection in accordance with their status. Women are held in esteem. But now things are changing fast and girls assert their claim for their share in property. The people are Sanatanis and believe in Karm-Kand. All the sixteen samskaras-from birth to death - are performed. The samskaras are the birth of the child, naming ceremony, mundan ceremony, sacred thread-wearing, engagement (Kurmai) followed by beah. The system of child-marriage was very much in vogue but now it is very rare. Marriage among the Brahmins is performed in adolescence. The marriage negotiations are initiated by the girl's father. The next important sanskar among the Dogra Brahmins is concerning the death. The mourning lasts for ten days. The death of an old person is celebrated while that of a young person is considered as a tragedy. Death rites are strictly performed in accordance with the traditions. Kirya-Karm is performed on the eleventh day, adhabarkhi (six monthly shradh) on the completion of six months, barkhi after one year and chaubarsi after the completion of four years of death. Shradhas are performed in the traditional style.

Majority of the people belong to middle income group. A very few of them are economically sound. Previously their household economy depended either upon priesthood or agriculture but now some have joined services and have entered business and trade also. Preparation of horoscopes, sooth-saying and astrology etc. have been the other sources of bread-earning for them. Their religion involves the worship of the gods and goddesses such as, Vaishno Devi, Sukrala Mata, Shiv temple and Narsimha temple. Besides these every clan has its deharas, deharis and kuldevta. Holy baths, giving charity and visit to the temples and shrines are the traits of festival-celebration. Every month some fasts are observed both by the men and women of this community. No influence of Arya-Samaj has been noticed amongst them. Women, sing folk-songs on the occasions of auspicious ceremonies namely birth, naming, mundan, tikka and beah. Such songs are called as bihayeeian, badhave, ghorian, sohaq etc. They also participate in dances.

They believe in Varna and abstained from any sort of relations with people of like fourth 'Varna'. Matrimonial relations were not permitted with the persons belonging to the other two Varnas next to Brahmins. Even those who functioned as priests in the social and domestic ceremonies were denied the right to share pangat (seat) with Brahmins of upper class. Pucca food, nowadays is accepted from the hands of the artisans and craftsmen. But much change is noticed, now, especially in the younger generation.



Brahmins have favourably responded to all types of development programmes. They share common hospitals, holy shrines, transport, water-pipes, common tube wells, with people from other three varnas. Agriculturist group of Brahmins is making full use of chemical fertilizers, canal - irrigation etc. The community is favourably reacting to the mass-media benefits. They are benefitting by the self-employment plans and family planning schemes.

Place : Jammu

Date : April, 1988

Champa Sharma



## THE POONCHI SIKH

## Abstract:

The Sikhs living in Poonch call themselves as Poonchi Sikh. The surnames used by them are Sudan, Sansan, Dutta, Ishar, Reen and Khajuria etc. They are reported to have been converted from Brahmins and thus, are also known as Brahmin Sikhs. The community perceives its identification at local level. Ethnographic accounts do not exist but historical accounts exist but these are debateable. The community has migrated to its present habitat where climate is cold, terrain is hilly, low humidity, medium rainfall and medium snowfall. There are 1,70,787 head as per 1971 census. They speak in Poonchi dialects and write in Gurmukhi and Arabic scripts amongst themselves whereas with others they speak in Punjabi and Hindustani and write in Gurmukhi. Panch Kakar : kesh Kakai, Kara, Kirpan, and Kachcha, are the community's identification markers. They come under Economically and Educationally Backward Classes in Jammu and Kashmir. No bio-anthropological information is available. They are regular non-vegetarian with pork. Women are also non-vegetarian. The cereals used by them are wheat, rice and maize. Among the pulses raimash and ronghi are most popular. Mustard oil is used in cooking. Men take alcoholic drinks occasionally but women do not. Drinks are purchased from the market. Fruits are consumed in plenty. They consume milk and milk products in plenty but they neither smoke bidi, cigarettes or charoot nor chew khaini and pan. Snuff is, however, used. They are changing from vegetarian to non-vegetarian and use of vegetable shows a decline. They prefer rice over roti.

Social divisions exist, the Brahmin converts are known as Bambay and the Kshatriyas Khake but there is no differentiation in the hierarchy. The Reen have started using the surname Raina but there are no changes in titles. The community's self-perception is high and other communities too treat them as such. Endogamy exists at community level and exogamy at gotra and surname levels. Consanguinity is absent. Junior sororate is permissible but is rare, levirate is absent. Adult marriage is the rule by mutual consent and negotiation. Symbols of marriage are absent. In the past bride-price was in vogue but now its occurrence is rare. Dowry is paid both in cash and kind, rule of residence is patrilocal. Divorce is permissible with social approval but no such cases were reported. Widow remarriages are permissible. Bride-price is giving way to dowry. Joint families are pre-dominant, avoidance and joking kinship behaviour is noticeable among the specific kin category. Property is the main cause of conflict in the family. Only sons enjoy the right of inheritance and only the eldest son succeeds.



Nuclear families are now replacing joint family system and the latter shows a decline. Women play active role in agricultural operations, animal husbandry, collection of fuel, in fetching drinking water and other economic activities. In rituals and other religious spheres they participate along with their men folk but they have no role either in political sphere or in mechanism of social control. Women's status is low though they contribute in family income and control family expenditure. Pre-delivery restrictions are observed and post-delivery observation of pollution lasts for 40 days. Amrit Khani ritual is observed after thirteen days of birth. When a male child attains the age of eleven years he undergoes pagri rituals and panch kakar are offered to him. Marriage rituals are roka, shagun, sehrabandi, viah and ardas. Marriages are usually performed in the fore-noon at bride-groom's residence or in a nearby Gurudwara. A marriage feast is given by the bride's parents and pupial are performed at bride-groom's residence. Children upto nine years of age are buried. The body of children and unmarried adults is covered with a white shroud whereas the bodies of adult married individuals beyond 60 years are covered in a coloured shroud. The eldest son lits the pyre. Cremation is followed by daily rendering of Shabad Gurubani and Kirtan till Akhandh Path is arranged. On fourth day the ashes are collected and are consigned to a sacred river viz; Goindwal Sahib or Kiratpur Sahib. Antim ardas followed with Pagri is the last funerary rit. Social reformatory movements have caused the curtailment of rituals which have become less expensive now.

In rural areas land is the main natural resource and it controlled by the government whereas in urban surroundings self-employment in transportation is the main economic resource. The landowning section of the community owns land individually and is occupied in settled cultivation. The major occupations of urban section are self employment in transportation and specialised service categories. Links with the regulated daily markets are direct and all transactions are made in cash. Neither bonded nor child labour exists. Community elders and priest play a role in mechanisms of social control. There is no traditional jati panchayat, sabha or village panchayat. Statutory panchayats exist to plan and implement development activities in villages. The people profess Sikhism. Baisakhi, Guruparavas and Sankrand, celebrated with a gusto, are major festivals of religious significance. No change in religion has taken place in the immediate past, but community is involved in socio-religious-cum-reformatory movements. Arts and crafts are lacking but oral traditions exist. Folk-songs are sung by both men and women. Folklore and folktales also exist. Men and women participate in traditional dances.

They accept and exchange water from all communities excepting Muslims. The same holds good for acceptance and exchange of kachcha and pukka food. Inter-community connubial ties are absent but they share water resources, crematoria, and participate in traditional fairs and festivals with other communities without playing any specific roles. Patron-client



landlord-tenant and cultivator labour relationships exist among land-owning sections of the community. There are scholars, creative asrtists, teachers, administrators, technocrats, and defence personnel in the community. Political leadership has emerged at regional level.

Education is considered favourable for boys who study upto higher secondary level and drop out due to economic reasons. Girls study upto post-graduate and higher levels, but some of them drop out due to social reasons. Attitude to traditional and modern medicare is favourable and they avail both system of medicare, response to family-planning is favourable and the people believe in small family norm preferring one or two children. Tubectomy is the general practice. Drinking water is available with locality through piped water supply, streams and springs. Rural Employment programme and Rural Employment Gaurantee Schemes are availed. Self-employment is in the field of agriculture and transportation. They listen to radio, and watch television. There are no cinema houses in and around Poonch. Hence they do not visit cinema. Dissemination of information is through political parties. Roads exist, post offices are situated far off in villages and railways do not exist. Electricity is used for lighting purposes; wood, cowdung cakes and kerosene oil are main fuels. Sources of irrigations are rain water and rivers. Organic manures, chemical fertilizers and insecticides are widely used. Mid day meals and I.C.D.S. programmes are fully availed. Ration supply is made through fair-price ration shops. Attitude towards banking is favourable and they are not dependent on money lenders and shop keepers.

Place : Poonch.

Date : 12.02.1989.

B.R.Rizvi  
Divender Singh



## THE DOGRAS

## Abstract:

The community is called Dogra by themselves and by other communities. The members of the community are also addressed by the titles of 'Mian', 'Thakur' and 'Kanwar' among themselves and also by others. Sometime they are addressed by the honorific of 'Rajja-ji' by others. The Dogras are a heterogenous community composed of various ruling tribes and their 'als' (subdivisions) whose ancestors migrated to Jammu hills from distant parts of India from time to time between fifth and the fourteenth century A.D. Their major stem clans are: Jamwals, Balauria, Chib, Bandrahl, Rasial, Hiuntal, Thakhur, Gaddi, Kishtwaria, Andotra and Salehria. They are scattered all over Jammu Province but their main concentration is in the fertile plain strip of Jammu. They also abound in Kandi submountainous tracts of low Siwalik hills, which are stony, arid uplands. The cradle of their culture is the strip of plain, formed of alluvial soil and irrigated by canals and Kuhls. Some of them inhabit the high valleys and dhars (spurs) of the Middle Himalayas which are usually cold and open to snowfall during the winter. They used to wear tight trousers, long shirt and long coat, and turban, usually dyed orange ('kesari') colour; they wore a long moustache turned upwards, and hair of the head falling to the neck beneath the turban. They usually carried a countrymade matchlock. But now some of their dress habits have undergone a change and literate among them have adopted Western dress form. They used to speak and write Dogri in Takari Script, but now they have adopted Devanagiri script and speak Dogri among themselves and with local communities, but speak both in Hindi and Urdu with outsiders. Their latest population figures are not available. They are non-vegetarian and eat pork. But their women particularly virgins, are Vegetarian, though they have no prejudice in cooking meat for their families. Wheat and rice in plains, and a grain called Maodil and 'sawak' in hills, are their staple cereal. They take all types of pulses but the beans called 'raj-mash' and 'ranung' are special articles of their region. They like lassi, milk and liquid 'sattu' (parched barley flour). Most of them are averse to alcoholic drinks and drugs, except opium, which was formerly used by aristocrats and elders. Wine is discredited. Agriculturist, and inferior classes among them, however, make its occasional use, especially on festive occasions. Now use of liquor is on the increase. They abstain from non-vegetarian diet and alcoholic drinks during the 'Nauratras'. Shriaddhas Pitra-Paksh and religious fast days.

They present a picture of a highly stratified community on



the basis of social hierarchy at the top of which stood the Mian class who belong to the ruling clans, greeted with the salutation of 'Jai-diya', they were called 'Jaikari'. They themselves had a succession of inferior grades, and it was always the inferior who first offered the salutation to the superior brethren which was then responded. The 'Mians' followed the profession of arms, and those among them who took to agriculture, fell from their grade. The second inferior grade was that of those clans who were plough-drivers - 'Halbah', and had taken to agriculture. The 'Mians' offered them the salutation of 'Ram-Ramia' or 'Salaami'. The 'Halbah' clans were also further sub-divided into successively inferior grades. This successive gradation was particularly marked in marital consideration and social gatherings such as community feasts. The 'Mians' took their wives from the second inferior grade clan but never gave their daughters to them. In community feasts they refused to share pangat (seat) with their agriculturist brethren. The Sallami section was further subdivided into two groups, 'Kahari' and 'Dohri'. The 'Kahari' intermarried only with certain families and were considered slightly superior socially than 'Dohri', who married on basis of equality and practised widow re-marriages called 'Karewa'. Now these barriers of high and low grades have broken down. Dogras are exogamous and normally monogamous. The 'Rishi-gotra', which in majority of Dogra clans is Bhardwaja, is of no consideration. Even those who belong to one 'Rishi-gotra', intermarry. The 'GOT' in their case is an exogamous clan. As such, Jamwal is a Got, similarly Charak, Chib and Balauria are 'Gots'. Marriage in vogue was of three types: 'dharm' or 'pun', in which no payment of any kind was made; batta-satta-ka natha, or marriage involving three or more families; and sale-purchase in which bride was purchased for a handsome amount. There were three stages to marriage: 'Kurmai' or 'tikka (betrothal) contracted when boy and girl were even below the years of age; 'beah (marriage); and 'maklawa or raphera (home-taking of the bride) when she had attained the age of puberty. Dahez (dowry) is in vogue. Divorce was not permitted. Similar widow re-marriage was prohibited, except among socially inferior clans who practised 'Karewa' or chadardalna. Now there are statutory provisions for divorce and re-marriage but such cases among Dogras are very rare. Their family is nuclear and patriarchal. Elders are shown full reverence and obedience. Property is owned in common but stands in the name of father of the family. Property is shared equally by the sons. In case where there are more than one wives, division took place on the basis of 'Chunda-wand', i.e., it was divided in equal 'Dheris' (shares) corresponding to the number of wives, then each 'Dheri' was further divided equally amongst the sons of that wife. Now under statutory provision girls also prefer their claim to equal share in father's property but such cases are still rare. Women are held in high esteem, particularly unmarried girls are revered as 'Kanjak', i.e. something pure and venerable. Although marriages are still arranged but the consent of the girl and her own choice is also honoured. Birth and boyhood rites are preparation of janampatri (horoscope) on the birth of child, rejoicings at the birth of a male child, panjab on the fifth day



when infant is purified by sprinkling of 'Ganga-jal' and name given to the child, on twentyfirst day the infant is taken out of the house; mundan-sanskara celebrated at the age of two or four years; investiture of 'janeu' at ten years or at the time of marriage according to the convenience of the family. Marriage is now celebrated at the age of adolescence and it is preceded by the rite of urmai (betrothal) and followed by 'maklawar' or aphera (home-taking of bride). The dying person is placed on the floor prepared for the purpose, and is made to perform sankalp (donation) of cow, grains and cash, etc., before breathing last. The dead body is carried on a bier to the shamshan (cremation ground) where it is burnt to ashes on a pyre amidst rituals and recitation of mantras. On the fourth day the phul (ashes) are collected and preserved to be immersed in the Ganges. The mourning period lasts for thirteen days, and on the last day the Acharaj Brahman performs the Kiriya rites and is given charities in the name of the deceased. Immediately there after, the house is purified by the havan and recitation of Vedic mantras by the purohit, and the heir is made to tie a turban in the gathering of the bradari who are then given a feast. On the first death anniversary (harakhi). Shraddha of the deceased is performed. On the fourth death anniversary chaubari, dans or (costly donations) are made in the name of the deceased and shraddha is performed. Afterwards, shraddha is performed annually during the pitr-paksh. Previously, superior clans went in for service in armed forces, and the remaining practised cultivation. Now military civil services and agriculture are their chief professions. some have entered business and trade. The hill Dogras are a poor class and work as labourers and domestic servants. Previously there were Bradari-panchayats to decide social problems and cases, but now this agency has become defunct and statutory panchyats have taken their place. The religion of the Dogras is the popular form of Hinduism in which the Hindu Trinity and Shakti in the form of Devi or Durga, also called Kali and Kalka, predominates. All the Avatars, particularly Rama and Krishna, are also worshipped in temples dedicated them. The people being staunch Sanatanists, show full faith in the Hindu pantheon and Karma-Kanda. They also worship Nagas and Siddhas, Kali Bir and other similar divinities which are attended by a speical class of priests called 'Chelas'. They also have their 'Gram-devtas' 'kul-devtas', and Satis, for which they raise mounds of earth or miniature shrines called 'Dheri' and 'Dehra'. 'Chelas' and 'jagis' officiate at such shrines. Belief in witchcrafts and magic (jarian) prevails to some extent, and the services of 'Chelas' are made use of for exorcising evil spirits. 'Jogis' are known to sing 'Jarian' and cause the sufferer to 'play' in order to remove the malady. There are a number of religious deities and their pilgrim places, both ancient and recent, of which those of Bawa Jitto and Vaishno Devi have attained extra-regional and national celebrity. They participate in all the fairs and festivals common to all other Hindu communities; but Channan-shattha and Bachh-doah are their important festivals. No socio-religious reform movement worth the name was started among them, except Arya Samaj, which could not become popular among them. Modern education and legislation,



however, have brought about much reform in the community. The hill section of the community is a singing host, indulging frequently in group folk songs and lyrics called Pakhan and Karkan. Occasionally they indulge in group dances called Phumaniar and 'hangra'; mixed dance is unknown. Dogra women enjoy religious and ceremonial songs and dance on festive occasions such as marriage and birth of a male child. They also enjoy listening to martial ballads, 'Baran', sung by Dres Garari and Jogi class of folk singers, who also compose and preserve these. But this art has now disappeared.

Dogras believed in 'Varna' and eschewed all intercourse with the fourth 'Varna'. Taking food and water even from the hands of, and sharing 'Pangat' (seat) with, craftsmen and artisans like Tarkhan, Kumhar, smith, was prohibited. Inter-community relations on connubial level are very rare and not approved of. But putative relations with other communities, even with the fourth Varna, were contracted on certain occasions such as marriage and 'Mundan', and relations of 'Dharam-bhai' or 'Sakhi' were formed. Landlor-tenant, employer-employed and cultivator relationship exists with all other communities, including the fourth 'Varna'.

They share public places like Pauchayat-ghars, wells, Dharmshalas tanks and water-supply schemes with the fourth 'Varna'. They are well disposed towards developmental plans and family planning schemes. They are benefitted by self-employment schemes but rural employment schemes are not available to them. Dogras have now emerged as a progressive community participating in all types of political, economic and cultural activities.

Place : Jammu

Date : Sept. 86

S.D.S. Charak



## THE JAIN

## Abstract:

The Jain community calls itself by this name and is also addressed by others by this title. About three decades back they were invariably called Bhabras by the local population and only occasionally referred as Jaini. But now the former term has been altogether dropped. It is said that the term Bhabra was derived from Bhao-bhala, (good-intention). The Jains cut away from Brahmanic community during the 6th century B.C. as a result of a reform movement led by a Jina named Parsvanath. The community pays a strong emphasis on ahimsa (non-injury to living being). They claim to have migrated to Jammu some three centuries ago. According to the figures of the census Report 1971, they numbered only 1,150 persons in Jammu and Kashmir. Bio-anthropological information on the community is not available. A few families are scattered in towns of Jammu, Doda, Udhampur, and Kathua. They speak in Dogri in Jammu region and in Kashmiri in Kashmir Valley. However, they write in Devnagari and also speak in Hindi with others. They wear the usual dress worn by other Hindu communities including the western dress, but their sadhus usually wear simple white dress consisting mostly of a long piece of cloth. The Digambara sadhus put on garments of Bhagwa colour and tie a piece of white cloth on their nose and mouth. Some of them also carry a brush of white hair (chauri). They are vegetarian. Alcoholic liquor are strictly prohibited, though use of wine has found some vogue in this community also. Rice and wheat are the items of their staple food. They use all types of dals and vegetables locally available. Fruit and milk also forms an important constituent of their diet. The sadhus do not take meals after sun set in order to avoid destruction of insect life.

They are divided into two main sects: Svetambara or Shwetambara and Digambara. The Shwetambaas split up into three gaddis (branches): Nagari, Gujerati and Uttradhi (northern). Under the influence of 22 gurus the Nagaris became a distinct community and came to be known as Bis-tola, and eventually Dhundia. The Digambaras also got divided into four Sanghas and then into various 'panthis'. In Jammu and Kashmir State the Jain community has the following chief gachchas or gots: Deravasv, Sthanikvasi. Shwetambara, Digambara and Murti-pujak. The priests or religious men among the Jains are of two types, Sadhus and Yati or Jati. The lay Jains are called Saraogis. The Bis-tola revere the 32 Sutras of Mahavir, but the Terapanthis have scriptures of their own consisting of 52 slokas. The Bispanthis are the orthodox Digambaras. Most of the sadhus and Saraogis, are recruited from the various groups of the Banias, such as



Aggarwal, Oswal Shrimal and Khandelwal. These castes and sub-groups serve as a sort of endogamous gots. But there is no sense of high and low among such groups. Family is patrilineal and usually extended in which the eldest member is the head of the family. After the death of the father the eldest son becomes the successor. In case of partition of the family all male members share the property equally. Under the latest legislation, females have also equal right to father's property. Women have a position of high respect in Jain family and they receive good education. Some of them have entered government service or have become physicians and lawyers. They participate in all the social, religious and political activities. They may also become sadhvis to preach religion and learn scriptures. They have formed their own organisation called Jain Sabha with its headquarters at Jammu lay dow rules and rituals for the Jain Bradari. The moral and religious tenets are described by their sadhus and iatris. Some form of prayashchit (punishment) is imposed by the Sabha on non-conformists. They perform most of sanskaras current among Hindus with some variation. After child birth five days are observed as days of pollution. On the fifth day a bath is administered both to the child and the mother. On 13th or 21st day after birth the baby is taken out of house and the mother takes to the usual domestic duties. No namkaran sanskar and mundan ceremony is performed. However, when the child is 2 or 3 years of age it is unceremoniously taken to the barber's shops and its hair is cut. Jains are monogamous. Their gots are normally exogamous but in case of necessity marriage within got is also allowed. They age of marriages is above twenty years both for boys and girls. Marriages are negotiated in the Hindu or Sanatanist system, and thaka, karmai, shaguna takes place. Marriage ceremonies take place at the bride's house. Services of a purohit (Brahmana) are acquired for the performance of the vedi rites. Dowry is given, but not demanded. Marriage is consummated at groom's house. Gaona or phera takes place at the time of marriage. Divorce is in vogue according to the Hindu conventions. Widow re-marriage, is now allowed in exceptional cases such as the tender age or supportlessness of the widow. Dead body is cremated and on second or third day the phool (ashes) are gathered in a kalash (pot) which is thrown into Tawi. These are not carried to Haridwar. The period for mourning usually comes to a close in a fortnight or so without any particular ceremony to mark the occasion. The gathering of phool (uthala) is the only death ceremony performed.

Jain are basically a trading (sahukar) community. They do not own lands but have shops, business houses and factories. They are financiers; some of them are jewellers. They do not cultivate any craft or art, except that of jewellery. Folk song and folk lore are not known to them. However, they contribute their share to the sophisticated culture of society. Now their children receive high education and professional and technical training and join services. Some of them are administrators, lawyers, doctors, political leaders and elected representatives. The community professes Jainism. They are devotees of Jina also termed Jineswara (chief of the Jinas), Tirthankara, Sravajna



(Omniscient) and Bhagwat (the Holy). In Jammu there are only a couple of their temples which house the murtis of one or more Tirthankaras before which they burn candles and incense and sing hymns of praise. They also visit Hindu temples and Hindu tirthas like Banaras and their own tirthas at Abu, Palitana, Parsavanath column in Chitor and Parsavanath hill in Bengal. They worship gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon and believe in most of the Hindu tenets but they deny the divine origin of the Vedas and the supremacy of the Brahmanas. Most of the sanskaras are administered by Jain scholars though at some like marriage, mundan, etc., they get the services of Brahmanas. Their sacred specialists, sadhus and iatis do not minister at their social and religious rites. They only preach the religious and ethical tenets in society. The Jains have no special fairs and festivals of their own but they participate in those of Hindu community. They observe their separate religious days. The Shwetambaras have their eight sacred days called Pajusanas beginning from the 12th badi to the 4th sudi in Bhadon, the 8th day being called Chhamachhri, the holiest day of the Jains. They fast on these days and spend much time in listening to or reading the scriptures (sutras). The Digambaras also observe fast and have their eight sacred days called atthai which occurs every fourth month. Besides they have ten sacred days called das lakshni from Bhadon sudi 5th to 14th.

Their inter-community and inter-ethnic linkages are controlled by their faith in ahimsa. Previously, they also believed in untouchability like other Hindu communities and did not have any commensalities with 4th varna communities and Muslims. But now they mix up freely with them though they still do not exchange food and water with them. They share public places and water resources with all other communities. They take part in all types of political activities at all levels.

They make use of all available means of communication like Radio, television, newspapers. Facilities of roads and railways are available to them. They are benefitted by all developmental programmes introduced in this State. They use electricity for domestic use, in business and in factories as source of energy. They make use of gas for cooking purpose. They are favourably disposed to family welfare programme and make use of all types of medicare available in Jammu city and other towns they inhabit. They are emerging as an advanced community in this State.

Place : Jammu.

Date : September 1988.

A.K.Billawaria



## THE DOGRA MUSLIMS

## Abstract:

Muslims inhabiting Udhampur, Jammu and Kathua Districts of the Jammu Province in J & K states are called Dogra Muslims. Main Sub-groups of the community are Gujjars, Bakarwals and the rest. Majority of them fall in the last category of "the rest". Gujjars and Bakarwals, excepting the bond of common religion, are independent communities themselves. Dogra Muslims are further sub-divided in various castes. They are physically well built, stout, attractive and weathish and mentally intelligent, brave, faithful and honest. They, other than the Gujjars and Bakarwals, speak Dogri, Punjabi, Kashmiri and Urdu languages simultaneously. Educated ones also speak English. Urdu in Arabic script is, however the main language employed by them for writing purposes both at home and with the kingroups. Well educated also use Roman script in this regard. Gujjars and Bakarwals speak Gujri and Bakarwali respectively. For writing purposes, however, Arabic is mostly employed by them. They wear the same modern dresses which other communities of the region wear. The typical Dogra dress comprising Kurta, Churidar pajama, waist coat and turban (for male) and Kurta, dupatta, and Churidar pajama (for female) are now rarely seen. Though Gujjars and Bakarwals have still retained their traditional dresses yet spread of education has brought tremendous change among them as well. No Bio-anthropological information is available. Dogra Muslims are non-vegetarian and eat beef. Mutton is, however, consumed regularly. The staple cereal is rice and maize. Other constituents of their diet are pulses, vegetables and fruits. Milk and curd are also frequently taken. They have no food inhibitions except the one that they take halal meat.

Institution of marriage is governed strictly by the Muslim Personal Law. Consanguineous marriages, sororate, levirate, and polygyny are also practised. The Gujjars and Bakarwals are, however, endogamous and after take resort to child marriage. The customs of muamila (marriage with a married women through compensation) and dhori (exchange of girl in marriage) are also prevalent among those inhabiting hilly areas. Dowry is accepted but not demanded. Joint family system still prevails. Recently, however, it has also started breaking up. Divorce, remarriage and property rights are also governed strictly in accordance with the tenets of Islam. The prominent marriage rituals are tel, mehndi and sehra bandhi etc. The consummation of marriage is followed by a sumptuous feast at the groom place called Walima. Women are hardworking and render great help to their men in



maintaining family but are still treated as a second rate citizen. Every Dogra Muslim woman prefers to give birth to her first child at her parent's house. After birth, mother remains in bed for 5 days, after which she takes bath and resumes her daily routine. If the new born is a male child then a special ceremony known as "Punjab" is performed on the fifth day. Tonsure ceremony is also performed but no day or time is fixed for this purpose. Another important ritual is the circumcision of the male child. No puberty rights are observed. The dead are given a bath at home and wrapped in a white cloth (Kafan) prepared in accordance with the Islamic norms. Kalimah is inscribed on it. The dead body is then carried to the grave-yard with chanting of Kalimah enroute and buried with its head towards north. The face of the dead is turned towards west in the grave. Mourning is observed for three days. Daswan (tenth), chaleeswan (fortieth) and the first death anniversary are also observed. Food is served after recitation of the holy Quran on all these occasions. No changes have occurred in life cycle rituals.

Major economic resource of the community is agriculture. The spread of education has, however, opened fresh avenues, like government service and self-employment etc. Gujjars and Bakarwals earn their livelihood by tending their flocks of cattle. At the village level panchayats exercise control over them strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir village panchayat Act No. XIII 1958. With regard to matters falling out of their jurisdiction they have recourse to law. Islam is the religion they profess and majority of them are Sunnis. Their major festivals are the same which are celebrated all over the Muslim world. Besides, they also visit shrines of the Sufi saints and commemorate their services to humanity.

They have produced fine writers, jurists, craftsmen, teachers, doctors, engineers, Musicians, painters and dancers.

The literacy rate has considerably improved after independence. They are drawing maximum benefits from the State government and Central government welfare schemes. All these measures have proved highly conducive in improving their standard of life.

Place : Jammu

Date : March 1988

Zahur-ud-din



## THE PERNE

## Abstract:

The Perne or Parna call themselves as Bangali, and Gad Jhir also. The sub-groups in order of hierarchy are Bambi, Gandhila, Khriche and Ban. The people are autochthones of the region which is characterised with hot undulating plains of high humidity, thin deciduous forest cover and medium rainfall. Their size of population is not known. They speak in Dogri amongst themselves and in Punjabi with others. There are no identification markers for the community. No constitutional status is accorded on them. No bio-anthropological information is available on the community. They are non-vegetarian with virtually anything found in the wild including carrion. Their staple food is wheat, and rice. Pulses and beans like rajma are side dishes; mustard oil is cooking medium. Tuberous vegetables are used. Men consume home-made alcoholic drinks regularly. Women occasionally; no restrictions are placed on using milk or milk products; both sexes smoke, men cigarettes and bidi, women prefer bidi. Fruit consumption is marginal. No changes in food habits reported.

They are divided into four above mentioned groups Bambi, since they carry twenty two red flags to Mata Vaishno Devi, are considered superior and the rest have a place in the hierarchy depending on the number of flags they are entitled to carry to the above shrine. They are divided into exogamous gotras. The community's self-perception is low whereas other communities treat them as the lowest. Endogamy is maintained at community level. Consanguineous marriages are allowed only at crosscousin level. Junior levirate is the rule but sororate is not popular though permissible. Boys marry at twenty two years and girls at nineteen. Mates are acquired through mutual consent, exchange and negotiation, the form of marriage is monogamy but polygyny occurs due to barrenness. Sundoor, mangal sootra, and toe-rings are symbol of a married woman. Dowry is paid in kind rule of residence is patrilocal, divorce is permissible on account of incompatibility. Only men can divorce, children are the liability of father. Divorcee, widow, widower remarriage is permissible. No changes in marriage system were reported. Family is nuclear. Avoidance is absent, joking exists. Male equigeniture is reported. Women are not entitled to inherit. Eldest male issue succeeds. Women collect fuel, fetch potable water, and play an active role in other economic activity to avert starvation. They have a role in social functions, rituals and enjoy an equal status vis a vis men, they contribute to family income and also control family expenditure when their men stay



away for long durations of time. The child is delivered at home. Mother gives a name to the neonate, a feast is given after 14 days and birth pollution ceases after 21 days. Pre-puberty ceremonies are not observed by either sex. Marriage rituals- Kurmai, lagan, phere are performed at bride's residence by a Brahmin. The dead are cremated. Death pollution ceases on 13 day. Dead bodies were buried in the past but now they are cremated. No changes in other life-cycle rituals were reported.

Forest was their - main natural resource but now they depend on the art of stealing, burglary, highway robbery, liquor manufacturing and begging. Resources are controlled by the government. They are mainly landless. Links with the regulated daily market exist directly. Bonded and child labour do not exist. Caste Panchayats do not exist. The mechanisms of social control are ineffective. They are Hindus and Vaishno Devi is their titular deity; they worship gods of wider Hindu pantheon. Sacred centres are Raghunath and Vaishno Devi temples and Hardwar. Family deities exist. Dashehra, Diwali, Lohri, and Baisakhi, being socio-religiously significant, are observed. No changes in religion occurred and the community is not involved in any socio-religious movement. They possess no art, no craft, no oral tradition, no music or dance.

They accept water and food (cooked and uncooked) from all communities excepting Churas. Communities above Sansi who give water and food to them do not accept the same from them Putative kinship is absent. They share shrines and temples with other communities and have free access to water sources and sacred shrines. Patron and client relationships exist amongst the female who earn allegedly through prostitution means. Community has no representation in white-collar jobs nor do they have engineers, doctors, businessmen and creative artists.

Education is deemed favourable for boys and girls but they do not avail the facilities due to their poor economy and peculiar circumstances they are confronted with. Police fear haunts their minds days in and days out. They are always held responsible for any crime committed in the area irrespective of its actual commission. Neither boys are sent to schools nor girls. Their attitude to traditional and modern medicare is favourable but the latter are not available. They favour small family norm, women go for sterilization. Drinking water is not available in the locality and it is brought from the river. Provision for employment are lacking. Very few of them are self-employed. They listen radio but other media of communication are lacking, rail and road exist nearby, post office is situated away from their locality. Electricity is not available. Wood and kerosene oil are the major fuels. Neither nutrition programmes are available nor do they make use of public distribution system and banking.

Place : Muththi Khurd  
Tehsil Kathua,  
Distt. Kathua, Jammu.

Date : September, 1988.



## THE BOTARAJA

## Abstract:

Botaraja are the people whose ancestors had migrated to Kashmir valley from Nagar principality in Gilgit more than a century back. In 1888, the chieftains of Hunza and Nagar rose in revolt against the Maharaja's rule and achieved some minor success in their adventure. In 1886, Uzz Khan, the chief of Nagar was captured by the Dogra troops and was brought to Srinagar as a captive along with his nearest clansmen. They were interned in the Hari Parbat fort in Srinagar. Later on during the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh, they were set free and rehabilitated in Srinagar. There are about twenty homesteads of this community in the locality called Mume Khan at Andaroni Kothi Darwaza in the foothill of Hari Prabat. About five families have settled in Bemina, in the suburbs of the city. They speak Nagari dialect among themselves but converse in Urdu with others. They have picked up Kashmiri as well while retaining their mother tongue Nagari. The script used by them is Arabic. The Botarajas dress themselves as Kashmiris do—kameez and shalwar for outdoor use. Until recently they used to don the special Chitrali cap called manakfarchin and a gown called choga as the overdress. Their original native dress has now fallen out of use and they cannot be differentiated from local Kashmiris as far as the dress is concerned. No special constitutional status has been granted to them. However, they receive a monthly maintenance allowance of rupees two hundred per month for the head of the family. This is paid by the state government. Bio-anthropological information about the community is not available. Being non-vegetarians, they generally eat mutton but are not averse to eating beef. Eating of pork is forbidden. Now the Botarajas have taken to vegetable and pulses. Rice is their staple food. Wheat, pulses, ghee and lately mustard oil are plentifully consumed. Milk, milk products and fruits are consumed in plenty. Alcoholic drinks are abhorred. Tea with sugar or with salt is a common drink. Noticeable changes are absent from food habits since independence.

There are no social divisions. The elders invariably enjoy respect and regard of their youngsters. Cordial relations exist between them and the local populace and both avoid harbouring antagonism. Marriage is performed according to Shia tenets. Twenty is the normal age of marriage for boys and the girls. Marriages are arranged by parents. There are no specific marriage symbols. Divorce is extremely rare, but it may take place on the asking of the husband. Divorced woman must complete the duration of iddat—before she remarries. If she has conceived of her divorced husband, the baby, when born, is to be



provided by its father. Issues pertaining to divorce and post-divorce maintenance are decided by the priests. Generally mates are selected from among the community members, but if one is not forthcoming then they may contact matrimonial alliance outside their group from amongst the Shias only. Botarajas preserve joint family system. In interfamily relationship respect to the elders is uppermost. The eldest son succeeds. Male equigeniture is the rule; daughters too have a share in paternal property but less than male. No change has occurred in the familial norms. There has not been any concerted demand by their womenfolk for equal rights. A widow has a right to heir late husband's property as long as they do not take another husband. Women do not do manual labour outside their homes but confine themselves to domestic chores. Young girls attend schools and adult females participate in polling and cast their votes according to their free will. They, however retire to private rooms when a stranger or a less familiar person visits the house. But when their own kith and kin visit, there are no reservations. Pre-delivery taboos are in vogue. Parturient mothers deliver in hospitals generally. Birth-pollution period is 7-8 days after which the mother and the newborn baby are given hot bath. The major ritual in case of a male child is that of circumcision. Betrothal ceremony takes place after mutual agreement between the two parties, and respective relatives join in a function for which a date is fixed and announced. Clothes, some golden ornaments, candy, cakes and other eatables may be exchanged on this function. Marriages are solemnized as per Shia Muslim customs in the bride's house. A dead is buried and the priest perform the death rites. Chaharum falls on fourth day and the chehlum (40th day) is also observed.

It is a landless community in terms of their past history. But with the passage of time, those who could afford to purchase land do so. However as a matter of fact, it is not at all an agrarian community. Menfolk are entering in government services particularly in police department. A few of them do small business to maintain themselves. Handicrafts of Kashmir, though much rewarding, are unknown to them. Womenfolk do not substantially supplement the income of the household. Below the age of 25, the youth are now hundred percent literate. Child or adult labour is totally absent. Young people take service in private sector if they do not find a government job. There are no regional or local associations or panchayats. Disputes are resolved either directly or through the good offices of the elders of the clan. Litigation is unknown to them as far as their internal affairs are concerned. The advice of the elders is seldom ignored in taking vital decisions affecting the entire community. They are Shia by faith. Muharram is the holy month of mourning wherein they join the processions taken out by the local Shias during ten day of the month of Muharram. Idul Fitr and Id-e-Ghadir are two festivals of religious importance and Navroz is a festival of socio-religious significance with them. For guidance in religious matters they approach Shia mujtahids and other priests who serve as sacred specialists. The community is not much interested in arts.



In matters of inter-community linkages, they accept cooked as well as uncooked food from Muslim community. They attend all social functions of Muslim community. Though they prefer marrying within their own group, but they may contract matrimonial alliance with the Kashmir Shias.

Boys and girls go to educational institutions without any discrimination. They community enjoys all the facilities provided by various public organisation and institutions like health service, food and water supplies, electric supply, public distribution system, transport etc. The community has reacted favourably towards the development process at the country.

Place : Srinagar.

Date : July, 1987.

K.N.Pandita



## THE KASHMIRI PANDIT

## Abstract:

The Kashmiri Pandits derive their name from Sanskrit word 'Bhattarika'. Locally they are known as Bhatta and outside the Valley as Kashmiri Pandits. Prior to independence they constituted nearly 2 percent of the State's population but with gradual migration from the State, they are estimated to be under one percent. They are distributed in all the districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The people inhabit the fertile plains of the Valley and are mostly concentrated in the urban areas and even in rural areas. They are Kashmiri speaking people and use Devanagiri, Arabic and Roman scripts for writing. In the recent past, they used to wear pheran (loose over dress) and dastar (head gear). Their ladies wear deihor (an ear pendant) and in past popular head-gear worn by them was known as tarang. At present, community has adapted to modern dress. Yoni (holy thread) is worn by the male members. Bio-anthropological information is quite scanty. These people are non-vegetarian and take the meat of chicken, fish, goat, sheep, fowl. They abstain from eating beef. Their staple food is rice. They consume all varieties of pulses, vegetables, fruits, milk products, soft drinks. Very few of them consume liquor. Except for religious festivals they do not observe diet restrictions.

There are two main sub-divisions among them, Gor (Priest-class) and Karkun belonging to Sarasvat Brahministic order. They are divided into 199 exagamous gotras. The founders of these gotras are said to be some Rishis (an inspired saint). Among Karkuns there is a further social division on the basis of occupation i.e., Buhurs and Purbi's. Ancient Kashmiri Pandits did have a formal system of Varna, which at present is non-existent. The Pandits are essentially an endogamous group but marriage between the members of same gotra is not normally solicited and principle of sapindi is still respected by all. They strictly prohibit the marriage among immediate blood-relations or even with distant relations. Pre-puberty marriages are not observed now as the marrying age for girls has gone upto 20 to 24 years and for males from 24 to 28 years or even later. Monogamy is the most common form of marriage and they are governed by Hindu Marriage Act. Sororal or leviral forms of marriage has not been reported among these people. Dowry is practiced. Divorce and remarriage permitted. Nuclear family predominates over other forms. Joking relations are permitted in specific category of relations. Inter-personal relations and inter-family linkages are cordial and quite firm. They follow Hindu Law of Inheritance. The eldest son succeeds as head of the family. Their women enjoy equal status with their men. Women



participate in social, ritual and religious activities along with their men; enjoy right over ancestral property, and contribute to the family income. They observe birth pollution for 13 days. First feeding aupchup ceremony is also performed, there is also a ceremony for naming the child called kah-nethar. Male hair cutting Zer-a-Kansev and Kan-beunhun (piercing of both ears of female-child) are other ceremonies performed. Sacred thread ceremony yagnopavit service as formal initiation of males to Brahministic fold. Marriage is performed at bride-groom's residence by a Brahmin priest. Consummation of marriage is performed on the same day. Dead are cremated and death pollution is observed for first 14 days. They perform annual shradhas to their ancestors.

Their traditional occupation was and has been government services. In the recent past they were also a land-owning community but land-reforms in the State has rendered most of them landless. A shift to trade and commerce and setting-up of industrial units is a recent phenomenon. Inter-caste marriages are not prohibited but are discouraged. They are mainly worshippers of Shiv and Shakti. They observe Hindu festivals and visit Hindu religions shrines besides going to local Muslim shrines to seek blessings. They participate in local festivals and fairs of the regional deities. They recite the folk-tales, songs from religious texts and of local poets/poetesses. There are good number of doctors, engineers, administrators, management expert academicians among Kashmiri Pandits.

They do not normally accept cooked food from non-Hindus but do accept kachcha food and water from others. They maintain social and marital relationship with others.

They have not been benefitted from developmental programmes. Kashmiri Pandits are a highly competitive ethnic group with very high self-perception.

Place : Srinagar.

Date : April, 1987.

Indu Aima

Ashok Aima



## THE KAVOJ

## Abstract:

The Kavoj of Kashmir are the traditional Muslim cremators of dead bodies of the Hindu and Sikh. The name appears to have been derived from the Kashmiri word Kawuj, denoting the works of cremation. They are distributed in Natipora, Dal, Noorbag and Kamarbari areas of Srinagar. They inhabit the cold climate of the Himalayas characterised by low rainfall and medium to heavy snowfall in the winter months. Population figure is not available on them. Kashmiri is the language spoken among themselves and also with other Kashmiries. Urdu is the script used by them. They do not belong to any constitutional category. They are non-vegetarian without beef and pork and rice is their staple food. They are fond of chai (salty tea) prepared in samawar (indigenous tea-pot). They are habituated in smoking iajir (hubblebubble).

The Kavoj do not have any social division. No differentiation is made at any level and their social status is at par with any other Muslim communities of region. Though community endogamy is a preferential choice, marriage with other Muslim community of the Sunni sect is never a restriction. Cousin marriage prevails. Junior levirate and sororate are permissible forms of remarriage. Though Islam allows them to marry upto four times, monogamy is reported to be common form. Divorcees, widows and widowers are permitted to remarry. A widow is allowed to remarry only after completion of the iddat (period of restriction). Both laterally and vertically extended families constitute the major types interspersed with nuclear families. Paternal property is shared equally by the sons and their widowed mother, while the daughters get less than that of the sons. In terms of their right on mehr (dower) and paternal property, contribution to family income, important roles in various socio-religious functions, the women's status is at-par with that of the men. Birth of a child is followed by the rituals of sunder and zerakashi. Khatnahan (circumcision) is performed on male children. The rituals connected with marriage are gandum, doonlaiz, dapanbata, malasbehoun, yenevoul, menzirat, niquah and wathal. Dead are buried and burial is followed by the rituals of chdharum and chehallum.

Certain Muslim families of the Sunni sect have been traditionally working as cremators, for generations, for the Hindus and Sikhs. Their work of cremation do not involve any ritta or pujapath (religious performance), which is the privilege of the pandits (Brahman priest). The work of Kavoj in a cremation is confined to lakridena (arranging wood for the



funeral), and Kapdauthana (removal of cloths from the dead body). The remuneration of a Kavoj cremator per dead body varies from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 300/- or more, depending on economic status of the bereaved family. On the following day some of the members of the bereaved family come to the crematorium to collect the sur or phool (ashes), which is kept ready by the Kavoj. They receive Rs. 5/- to Rs. 10/- for handing over the sur. Besides cremation they ~~also engage themselves~~ in agriculture, wage labour, shawl embroidery etc. to supplement their livelihood. They have direct link with market which one fully regulated. Their is neither bonded labour nor child labour among them. Community level disputes are dealt with by the council of elders. Statutory formal panchayat also exists for general welfare activities. They profess Islam and do not have the concept of any deity. Shawl embroidery is the only craft known to and practiced by them.

Linkages with the neighbouring Muslim communities are established through exchange of food, intercommunity marriages, sharing of water resources, burial ground and religious shrines etc. Apart from various other socioeconomic interactions, crematorium is one of the main area of establishing linkages with different Hindu and Sikh communities of the region.

Their attitude towards education of girls is not favourable. Boys generally study upto higher secondary level and only in a few cases they do come upto the college level. They do not disfacour indigenous medicare system but mostly make use of the modern system. They disfavour family planning programme. Drinking water is available within the locality through tap. Most of them are self-employed in agriculture and shawl embroidery. They are exposed to the common media and mass communicational facilities excepting railways. They make use of electricity facility. Fire-wood, cowdung cake, charcoal and kerosene oil are used as fuel. Rain water and water from the system is not favourable and at the same time they do not depend on moneylendeers and shopkeepers for borrowing and credit.

Place : Batmaloo

Date : Aug.-Sept., 1988

B.K. Basu



## THE DHAMALI FAQIR

## Abstract:

Dhamali Faqir are a group of folk dancers of Kashmir. Their style of dancing is known as Dhambael. While dancing they get possessed and their followers make offerings of cash and kind while they are in state of trance. Hence they came to be known as Faqirs. They live mostly in several areas and perceive their distribution at local level. They live in cold climate characterised by valley formation with low humidity and moderate rainfall, thin forests and medium snowfall. There is no indication of their population size. They speak in Kashmiri and write in Arabic script. There are no mark of identity carried by them. They have been categorised as a Social Caste by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir. No bio-anthropological information is available on them. They are non-vegetarians with beef. Rice is their staple diet. Milk and milk products are consumed by them but alcoholic drinks are taboo. They smoke charas.

Social divisions do not exist but those living in Zolo Gopal Pora consider themselves superior to others in the community. The community's self-perception is medium in the regional hierarchy but other communities give them a low status. They are not aware of Varna system. Endogamy was maintained at community level in the past but now they seek matrimony with other communities of equal status. Consanguinity and cousin marriage is present. Marriage is performed after attainment of adulthood by negotiation and exchange. There are no symbols of married women. Dowry is paid both in cash and kind and mehr is promised for future payment. Rule of residence is patrilocal. Divorce is permissible on ground of inability to provide a male issue, maladjustment, impotency, insanity. divorce compensation is paid to wife. Only the husband can divorce and children are the liability of father. Widow, widower and divorcee remarriage is allowed. No changes in marriage rules were observed. Family type is mixed extended. Avoidance relationship is not in vogue. Joking relationship exists within specified kin of the same generation. The points of conflict in the family are property and challenge to the authority of elders. Male equigeniture is the rule of inheritance. Daughters are also entitled to inherit paternal property in a lesser proportion to that of males. Only the eldest son succeeds. There is a rising trend in the formation of nuclear families. Women participate actively in agricultural operations, tending cattle, collection of fuel, fodder and in fetching water. They also play active role in social functions, but have no role to play in rituals and



religious sphere; political sphere and mechanism of social control. They have a low status inspite of the fact that they carry out all domestic chores and contribute to family income. Life cycle rituals performed are zarkasai, khatnahal, and marriage as per Islamic tenets. Dead are buried and chaharum and chehlum are performed. No changes have occurred in life-cycle rituals.

Dancing is their major economic activity through which they make their living by way of getting alms and offerings at different ziarats (pilgrim centres). During winters, they weave Kangri cover and chadar (Kashmiri blanket). They are mainly landless. Some of them work as daily wage labourers in brick kilns. Payment of wages is made in cash. They depend on fully regulated daily markets. Child labour is common but bonded labour is absent. Traditional caste Panchayat does not exist. Minor disputes are referred to Magun, the leader of dancing group, for adjudication. Indiscipline while giving a dance performance is not tolerated. Statutory Panchayat plans and implements welfare and welfare activities in villages. They are followers of Islam and maintain individual as well as family affiliation of Pirs. They visit various shrines dotted all around the valley. Their sacred specialists belong to other community whose functions are to import religious teaching, performance of life-cycle rituals, curing of ailments and neutralising the effects of evil spirits. They observe all local Muslim festivals of religious importance. They possess no arts. Weaving and basketry are the only crafts they know of. The people possess oral traditions and sing folk songs. Only men participate in traditional dancing.

They accept water and food from all Muslim communities without having any concept of kachcha and/or pucca food. Inter-community marriages do not take place. They play a specific role in festivals by way of their dancing and trance. They maintain their relationships with patrons from whom they receive alms and clients to whom they serve as soothsayers. Community has creative artists, teachers and other white-collar job holders.

Education is deemed favourable for boys but partly favourable for girls. Boys study upto primary level and drop out due to economic reasons. The same is true for girls as well. Their attitude to traditional and modern medicine is favourable; they make use of both. Attitude to family planning is not favourable. Drinking water is available through rivulets and tap water supply. They have availed Food for Work facilities under relief measures initiated by the government. They have not been able to avail self employment facilities. They listen to radio, watch, televisions and visit cinema. Roads exist nearby, post office is situated far off and there is no railway near their locality. They are users of electricity; firewood and cowdung



akes are major fuels. Mid-day meal programme is not available but I.C.D.S. and Rahbar-e-Sehat programmes initiated by the government have benefitted the community. Ration supply facilities have been availed but their attitude towards saving is not favourable.

Place : Srinagar

Date : August, 1988

Reyaz Rufai



## THE SAIYED

## Abstract:

Saiyeds are the progeny of the Holy Prophet Mohammad through his daughter Saiyed-un-Nisa Fatima Zehra and her husband Saiyedna Ali Murtāza. Etymologically they may be called as chief, leader, master. Synonyms are Mir, (leader), Agha (master) and Shah. (King). Their sub-groups in Kashmir are: Saadat-e-Hamdaniya (Peerzada), Mantaqi, Baihaqi, Razavi Moosavi and Shirazi etc. The community is identified at transnational level. Their accounts exist in history and most of them were found to be true. They are immigrant to Kashmir Valley from Soviet Central Asia, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and Iraq etc. and historical accounts testify their immigration to Kashmir. The community perceives its distribution at national level. In Kashmir, they are mainly concentrated in Srinagar, Badgam, Kargil, Baramulla, Anantnag and Pulwama districts where climate is cold, humidity low, forests thin and rainfall medium; medium to heavy snowfall occurs during winters. Their population was 52463 according to 1911 census. They speak in Kashmiri with the kin whereas with others they speak in Urdu; and use Arabic scripts besides Roman. The community does not carry any identity markers now but the priests wear a black turban (ama ma) and black tunic; the apparel that Prophet Mohammad used to wear. They are not conferred with any constitutional status. No bio-anthropological information is available on them. They are non-vegetarians with beef. Their staple food is rice and wheat. They consume only moth as pulses are not very popular with them. Mustard oil is the cooking medium. They drink only non-alcoholic drinks. Milk and milk products are used in plenty. They smoke cigarettes and jajeer (hubble-bubble). Tea and gahwa are common drinks. Fruits are consumed in plenty. No changes in food habits were recorded but the quantity of food has improved.

Social divisions exist on the basis of territory, sect, and economic status. Social differentiation does regulate marriage alliances. One particular sect among them do not go for marriage alliance with another sect and economically well off families prefer to seek matrimonial alliances with other economically and social well off groups. Endogamy does exist at community level. Parallel cousins are preferred but there is no restriction on marriages with cross cousins either. Junior sororate and junior levirate are permissible but their occurrence is rare. Children are married after attaining puberty; boy at the age of 20 to 25 years and girls after attaining the age of 18 to 22 years. Mates are acquired through mutual consent, negotiation, exchange and mutaia (temporary marriage contract). Monogamy is prevailing form of marriage but polygyny is permissible. Dowry is the paid



in kind but it is never demanded. Mehr is fixed at the rate of Mehr-e-Fatimi and is paid instantly but the cases of deferred payment are not uncommon. It is however payable at demand. They are patrilocal. Divorce is permissible with religious approval. The motives of divorce are adultery, maladjustment, chronic sickness, cruelty and insanity. Compensation and maintenance is paid to wife. Children are liability of father after passage of infancy. Widow, widower and divorcee remarriage is permissible. No changes are reported in marriage. Families are extended as well as nuclear, the latter being a pre-dominant type in urban areas. Avoidance and joking relationships are absent. Elders are paid due regards and intra-familial relations are cordial. No conflict and confrontations were reported in intra-familial kin bonds. The paternal property is divided equally among male issue. Girls are also entitled to receive their share in paternal property in lesser proportion but they never demand it. Succession goes to the eldest male issue. Extended families are being slowly replaced by nuclear families. No changes were noticed either in inheritance or in succession rules. Women have limited roles to perform. They have no role in agricultural operations, and other economic activities as they are put in seclusion. However they participate actively in socioreligious spheres. Some of them are in active politics. Their status is not low but not at par with their menfolk. They usually do not contribute to family income but control family expenditure. No sooner the signs of pregnancy appear the parturient mothers are put under pre-delivery restrictions. The postdelivery pollution continues for forty days. Child delivery takes place in hospitals. No sooner a child is born, an elderly member of the family whispers azaan into ears. Aqina ceremony is performed and a goat or ram is sacrificed to mark the occasion. Male children undergo circumcision within three years of age. There are no puberty rites for the children of either sex. Marriage rituals are nishani, hazri, nikah and rukhsati. A priest delivers the segha and seek the consent of both the bride-groom and the bride three times in succession. A feast is given by the bride's side to all the guests. All marriage ceremonies are held at the bride's place. Bride-groom's party too throws the Wathal (walima) feast. Nuptials are performed at husband's house. Dead are buried after bathing the deadbody (ghusle-e-Jansaza) and performance of nimaz-e-Janaza (funerary prayers). A payur (stone slab) is put on the grave indicating name and death date of the deceased of Chaharum amidst incantation of fatiha (recitation of the 1st surah of Quran). Chehlum is observed in the similar manner on fortieth day. A feast is given to the mourners on both the occasions. No change in life-cycle rituals were reported.

The people are traditionally landless but occupations pursued by them are priesthood, employment, selfemployment, business, horticulture and industry. Their links with the market exist directly and all transactions are made in cash. Neither bonded labour nor child labour exists. Priests play an active role in the mechanism of social control in absence of traditional caste panchayats. Disputes pertaining to property, familial discord, and marriage etc. are referred to them for adjudication.



If their decision is not honoured, the disputes are resolved through judicial process. The people are divided into various sect denominations such as Sunni (Hanafi School), Shiite (Twelvers) and Ahle-hadith (Wahabi). The Shias follow the fatwa (decree) of Alam, (the high priest(s) of Iran and Iraq). It is obligatory for each Shia male adult to be in tagleed (following) of an Alam who is the deputy of the last and living Imam Al-Mahdi (A.S). The Sunnis are silsila affiliated to Pirs and Muslim saints but the Ahle-hadith do not follow either and derive all religious guidance and inspiration from the Guran and Sunnat. Mujtahids are the sacred soecialists of the Shites whereas Molvis and Pirs are the sacred specialists of Ahle-e-Hadith and Sunnis respectively. Mecca, Karbala, Najaf, Qum, Kazmain, Koofa Baghdad and Medina are their sared shrine where they go for pilgrimage. The Sunni section undertake pilgrimage to Sufi Saint's astanas at Delhi, Ajmer, Roorki and Gulbarga etc. Sacred specialists are from the same community who lead Nimaaz prayers, supervise the conduct of life-cycle rituals, impart religious education and show the path of righteousness to the believers. They observed all important Muslim festivals of religious significance such as Eidain, Milaad-un-Nabi, Shabe-Meraj, Shab-e-Qadr, Navroz, Id-e-Ghadir, and Urs of sacred Muslim saints. Change of religion has not taken place in the community but sect affiliations may, at times, be changed. Community has involved in many socio-religious and political movements such as freedom struggle, and Khilafat Movement. They excelled themselves in the art of calligraphy, shawl embroidery and papier-machine. They possess a rich tradition of folklore and folk-tales. Music and dances, other than devotional and religious in nature such as Qawwali and marsia-khaani, are abhorred. Women donot participate either in dance or in music except in recitations in Maulood Sharif, nauha and marsia khani.

They accept water and food from all other Muslim communities. Marriage take place with other communities such as Sheikhs and Moghals in contemporary situations if every effort is failed to find out a suitable match within the community. Community has businessmen, scholars, creative artists, most of them hold white collare jobs as teachers, administrators, jurists, ambassadors, ministers, engineers and doctors. Political leadership has emerged at national level.

Education is considered favourable for both boys and girls. Who study upto postgraduate or higher levels. Girls often drop out due to social reasons. Madrssa education also plays an important role in the careers of boys and girls. They make use of both traditional and modern medicare. Their attitude towards family planning is averse and no modern methods of birth-control are used. Sterilization and induced abortion is considered un-Islamic. Drinking water is available through tap water supply, springs, rivulets and streams. Rural employment programmes are not available but they are self-employed in running small-scale industries, transport agencies and contractorship. They are exposed to all the media of communication radio, newspapers, television (song and dance programmes are avoided). Cinema is



avoided. Railways do not exist but roads and post offices are situated nearby. They use electricity. Wood, kerosene oil, petroleum gas are the main fuels. Attitude towards saving is unfavourable as utilisation of interest on principal is considered un-Islamic, banking facilities however are availed.

Place : Srinagar.

Date : July, 1987.

B.R.Rizvi



## THE WANI

## Abstract:

Wani is a Kashmiri word meaning 'grocer'. The members of this community run shops for sale, on retail basis, of sugar, salt, country oil and condiments. They are also engaged in moneylending. According to Fauq the term 'Wani' is a distorted version of Vaish, one of the four principal castes of Hindu who made their living by trade and commerce and even after adopting Islam they did not change their occupation. The community is engaged in a variety of trade and identified accordingly such as Telwain (seller of oil), Poni wain (sellers in Pashmina wool), Band wain, Lasab wain, Tarangad wain etc. Origin and history of the community is not known. They are distributed in all the districts of Kashmir valley having cold climate and mountainous terrain. They speak Kashmiri and their script is Arabic. They dress themselves like other Muslims of Kashmir they are non vegetarian in food habits and rice is their staple diet. Salty tea is their favourite drink. They are fond of milk and milk products. Bio-anthropological information is lacking.

The community places itself under Sheikh one of the four principal divisions of Muslims. There is no social division within the community. Differentiations are economic, occupational and educational which regulates their marriages. They consider themselves in the middle wrung of the regional hierarchy. Other rank them equal to Lone community. They are endogamous but can marry their daughters to any Muslim caste of equal status and occupation. They give first preference to cousin marriages. Junior sororate and junior levirate marriages are permitted. Mates are acquired through negotiation and exchange of sisters. Monogamy is the usual form of marriage. There are no symbols of a married woman. Dowry and Mehar are in practise in the settlement of marriage. Residence is patrilocal. Marriage can be dissolved by desertion, separation and divorce on the ground of adultery, maladjustment, impotency etc. Compensation is given to the aggrieved party. Both the husband and wife are free to seek divorce. Widow, widower and divorcee remarriage is permissible. The divorced women has to observe a period of Iddat of one hundred days before remarriage. Families are generally mixed extended. However, a son after marriage may establish a separate household. Inter-personal relationships are amicably established among the family members. Avoidance relationship is maintained between younger brother's wife and husband's elder brothers. Joking relationship is established between husband's younger brother and sister-in-law and between husband and his wife's younger sisters. Inheritance is through



equigeniture but females get less than males. Succession is patrilineal. Women shoulder major burden of domestic chores still their status is low. Life-cycle rituals connected with birth, childhood, marriage and death and common to other Muslims of Kashmir. On child birth pollution is observed for forty days. Rituals observed on child birth are iaw, sunder, zarkashai, aqiqa and khatna. Marriage rituals are gandun, dapan, bata, mala behun, mass mechravon, matamenz, manzi-rat and nikah. In the event of death pollution is observed for forty days. Important rituals are chaharum and chehalum.

Land is the major economic resource. In rural areas they are cultivators and also own grocery shops. A few own apple orchards in the village. In the city a few members of the community have invested in apple trade, shawl industry and carpet industry. They are also engaged in services both government and private sectors. Traditional caste council does not exist. Disputes over land and marriage are solved either by the elders or taken to the court of Law. The community has representatives in the statutory Panchayat. They believe in Islam. There are several sacred shrines and mosques. They observe all the Muslim festivals with others.

Being involved in business and trade they maintain good relations with other Muslim and Hindu castes. The services of Waza, Pir, Gilkar, Hajjam, Ahangar, Ganai, Goor, Karal, Sofi, and Gorkun are available to them. They accept food and water from all other communities except Water. They exchange food both kacca and pacca with others. Those having surplus land give a parcel of it to other communities on rent. They have doctors, engineers and white-collar job holders.

They have been benefitted by the development plans and programmes. Educationally they are still backward in the villages as compared to those living in the cities. Facilities of primary health centres are available in the villages near the roads while those living in remote areas still depend on indigenous medicines. Under the Integrated Rural Development Programme stipends are given to the boys and girls of poor families for vocational training in tailoring, carpent weaving, carpentry etc. Facilities of Rural Banks are available to the villages, which have certainly improved the general economic conditions of the rural communities.

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Place : Srinagar

Date : Sept. /October 1986

Dr. P.N. Lal



## First war of Indian Freedom—1857 — Jammu's Traditions Role

Before the great revolt started, the revolutionaries had made full preparations and formulated elaborate schemes. Sadhus or Faqirs to the military cantonments to arouse the spirits of the sepoys against the British Raj. They also conducted secret correspondence with some Indian officers in code language and script the result of these strenuous efforts was wonderful. The spirit of rebellion spread through every nook and corner of the country. The red lotus flower and chappati (bread) were the emblems of the revolutionary's propaganda. The sepoy regiment circulated the lotus flower from one hand to another hand with the stipulation that the last man to receive it had the responsibility to pass it on to the next regiment assuring them that all the comrades expressed their readiness to join the revolt. These lotus flower were circulated at various military from Peshwar to Batrackpore. Likewise, the village watchman circulated that chappatis, the first duty was to eat a small piece out of it himself and pass on the remnant part to the villagers. They would mix it with large quantity of flower and prepare hundreds of chappatis. All the inhabitants of a village would eat them indicated their willingness to join the revolt. The last chappati was passed on to the chokidar of the next villages. This seemed to prepare the entire nation for launching the great struggle against the British Empire the D-day (date of deliverance from the yoke of firangi rule) was fixed to May 31, 1857.

A Brahman sepoy Mangal Panday raised the banner of rebellion and fired at his Adjutant Major Hunson on March 29, 1857. But none responded. This enabled General Heassey to control the situation and Mangal Panday was executed on April 8, 1857. This suppressed the discontent among the soldiers for some time. The news of Mangal Panday's heroic action and his execution soon spread like wildfire all over the country. Hardly a month later, the sepoys revolted at Meerut on May 10, 1857 and started on their March to Delhi (Dill Chalo). The revolution had begun.

In Delhi the people has also raised to revolt against British Raj. The Mughal King Bahadur Shah Zafar, his Begum Zeenat Mahal and Begam Hazrat wife of Nawab Wazid Ali Shah a Shrewd minister to the raise of revolt.

Hindus and Muslims had fought shoulder to shoulder during the revolt of 1857. In fact after the suppression of the revolt, the British Officials had taken a particularly vindictive attitude towards the Muslims hanging 27,000 Muslims in death alone from now on the Muslims wave in general looked with British ruler and suspicion.

"It (Deoland) was also a centre of political revolt against British rule and imparted to its students love for political freedom the Deoland School and many similar movements kept them alive the spirit of freedom." (Historian Mr. Aryan Dev).

The Brahmin a community was the forefront to kept alive the spirit of freedom in the revolt 1857. Lakshmi Bai Rani of Jhansi, a girl of the age of 20 years. Her heroic deeds, who were to breath died in the field of fighting. Peshwa Nana Sahib Maratha, Tantya Tope, Babu Kunwar Singh were the spirit of freedom struggle the people of the country to sacrifices about more than 1 1/2 lakhs in the field fought. *were died.*

The main thrust of the new government was, however, on the sepoy of the Bengal army revolted along with revolted along with their comrades in other parts of the country at Jullundur Phillour and Ludhina, put the princes of Jind, Nabha and Patiala sides with the Britishers and extended them full support and co-operation in their hour of distress.



The British rule of India and shaken to the foundation, but the revolutionaries were defeated. This common heritage of a great culture rich historical tradition imbued the Hindu with an Idea of common nationality. Bal Gangadhar Tilak preached nationalism in Maharashtra. He started the Shivaji Utsav and Ganesh festivals, making a profound appeal through the twin bases of Hindu nationalism, namely religion-cum-culture and historical traditions. Similarly, the Sikhs derived their national inspiration through the memory of Banda and Guru Govind Singh who sacrificed themselves for the honour of the religion. The Muslim imbibed national feeling ever earlier than the Hindus. The great movement Wahalism started in 1820 by Sayid Ahmad with the object of purifying Islam soon developed into definite plan to restore the rule of Muslims. The underlying religious theory was that a Muslims must not live in Dar-ul-Herb, i.e. a country under non-Muslim ruler. They must declare 'JIHAD' or holy war against such ruler, and either establish 'Dar-ul-Islam,' i.e. must rule, or migrate to another country ruled by Muslim.

In this desperate situation of fresh British expedition of 9,000 troops was sent. The wahals were defeated in several engagement and the confederacy (Group of confederate states) of Pathans organized by them was broken. A series of State trials awarded heavy penalties upon them and thus the movement was finally stamped out of India.

### Shri Ram lives In our hearts—Dharam and Rashtar

In this connection, it is relevant to point out that Mahatama Gandhi believed that a yatra (Pilgrimage) is a vow of self-purification and that it is directed towards achieving spiritual purity though self-restrain. He asserted that such a pilgrimage is undertaken as a means of striving towards reaching the goal of finding God in heart.

The truest prayer is to listen to the 'Inner Voice', the voice of Ram, within. And Ram, in the context of his method of symbolic expression, was not the epic hero Ram, but Atma-Ram. It was the divine power which resides within each person and not in Ayodhya. A devotee believer, he asserted, can say his prayers anywhere either in his house or on an open ground. A temple or mosque exists whenever a believer says he prayers. In a similar ven Gandhiji referred to Ram Raj as a kingdom of God within. He explained "Ram-Rajya" means Hindu Raj. It mean by Ram-Rajya divine Raj, the kingdom of God—To arrive at the genuine experience part of the reality behind the word democracy."

### Freedom struggle of Brave Dogra sacrifices in Jammu's Role

The saga heroism, courage, sacrifices of Venda Matram thrilled great Chandra Shekhar Azad and his revolutionism colleagues including S. Bhagat Singh, Pandit Ram Prasad Ismil, Bhagwat Charan, Ashlaala Khan, Jammu to sacrifices Daya Krishen Gardish (brother-in-law Rishi Kumar Koushal former MLA), Prof. Prem Dutt (Doda), Kasturi Lal (Bhamber), Lahori Lal (Mirpur). Comrade Sukhdev (Jammu) who was S. Bhagat Singh the brain, Milap Chand of Jammu, Gopal Dass Khatri of Jammu, Girdhari Lal Khatri, Prakash Nath Khatri, Pearey Bhatra, Prithi Raj Khatra who were the soil of Jammu, Inderjit Gupta Advocate of Jammu, Comrade Dhanwanti of Jammu. All revolutionaries the freedom struggle were their activities in Lahore the centre.

Chandra Sheikhar Azad and S. Bhagat Singh to visit Ved Mandir, Jammu

Shri Inderjit Gupta, a leading lawyer of Jammu, came into contact with the revolutionaries in Lahore as a young student in his early teens, and was entrusted by S. Bhagat Singh, to



set up the centre in Jammu which could train young men for revolutionary activities and also to be used for storing arms and ammunitions.

In the 2nd week January 1926 Shri Azad and S. Bhagat Singh came to shop of Inderjit Gupta's brother and inquired about Gupta, giving their identity in fake names. Shri Azad was dressed in European dress and S. Bhagat Singh is in Dogra dress. He sent for your brother. We exchanged the code word's and on being satisfied of their identity and the brother to welcomed and serving tea etc. Immediately to took them the Ved Mandir. There was absolutely no population around it and normally the people of the city did not go there. They were much liked the place, the appropriate our choice and asked to go ahead for getting permission etc, if any required for the competent authority.

Shri Azad will soon be rending one Anand Swami to start the preliminaries and completing other necessary formalities. I was told that Shri Anand Swami was young man, who had come out of the college for joining the Independence Movement the call of Mahatma Gandhi, in order to concealed his identity he had assumed the guise of a Sadhu. He had been brought in the party and was deputed for the organization of youngmen by starting an Ashram operantly for exercises and physical training in reality for giving arms training and acquainting them with the aims and objects of the revolutionary party and giving them religious, political and historical education for the attainment independence of India and for serving the illiterate and downtrodden masses. He was learned man with knowledge of Hindi, Sanskrit and English and was fully acquainted with political events relating to the freedom struggle and was a follower of Lord Rama and of Rana Partap, Chatterpati Shivaji.

A temple or mosque exists wherever a believer says his prayers. In a similar vein, Mahatma Gandhi referred to "Ram-Raj" as the kingdom of God within. He explained Ram-Raj is the kingdom of right-teousness. By Ram-Raj do not mean Hindu Raj. It mean by Ram-Raj, the kindgom of God...To arrive at the genuine experience of Ram-Raj is an essential part of the reality behind genuine experience Ram-Raj divine Raj, the kingdom of God...To arrive at the genuine experience of Ram Raj is an essential part of the reality behind the word democracy.

As a believer in the oneness in all the diversity of the universe he was vitally concerned with communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims. He believed that the Islam idea of brotherhood expressed in the Kuran could be expended infinity.

Vande Matram is the two word slogan that forms the first line of this patriotic peon written by Shri Bankim Chander Chatterji, one of the illustrious sons of India. The peon appears in his immortals novel Anand Math, which was published in 1882 Chatterjee's uninspiring writing gave prestige and dignity to Begnali literature. He enriched it was patriotic fervour and emotional appeal. In the process awoke the slumbering soul of India that lay torpid under foreign British joke. The slogan crossed borders of Bengal and spread throughout the length and breadth of India. It became the national song of the day it was sung at the political session of India National Congress held in 1896. The song resonated throughout the then British Empire. Curzon, the willy viceroy sensed the danger in peoples' patriotic mood. The viceroy ordered division of Bengal on communal line on 1905. At that time Bengal comprised of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and North East. The resisted by people and slogan "Venda Matram" received a higher pitch and the British is forced that the division of Bengal was dropped immediately 1906.



Anand Swami had some contacts with one Pandit Pindi Dass Goswami a patriotic young and energetic Advocate. He was in charge of some theosophical society and took keen interest in many social and other activities. He showed interest in the welfare of youth and also the freedom struggle. He was approached him and told all about the plan of starting an Ashram for organizing youngmen and imparting them physical and religious training to make them true citizens of India. After giving him some idea of the scheme and requested him to use his good offices to secure the permission of Ved Mandir for this purpose. He also requested him to become out patron (Patronizing) and give us the able guidance this matter. He readily agreed and got the permission in his own name. In the third week of January Shri Anand Swami arrived here and gave his identity by code words.

Shri Swami to Ved Mandirs to occupied the room in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and managed other requirements. The whole compound was got thoroughly cleared and a sign board with the words "VIR ABHIMANYU ASHRAM".

A patriotic man Shri Kanshi Ram Aggarwal, who was a wholesale cloth merchant in Raghunath Bazaar. When he was told that in was the chairman President of an ideal institution, he took no time to accept it was gratitude and under-took to give financial help to make it a success. Similarly Swamiji approached one Hakim Vishwa Nath, who was a very energetic social worker besides being a qualified Hakim. Some other well known intellectuals, doctors, businessmen and lawyers took keen interest in the activities the Ashram. Shri Ram Nath Kapur, who was the sole manager of Dewan Badri Nath Estate. He was a nice man and a social worker besides holding a high office of responsibility. He was kind enough to render all possible assistance to Swamiji and further referred a committee of Ashram with Lal Ram Nath Kapur, Goswami Pindi Dass Advocate, Lal Harbans Lal Public Prosecutor and a few other prominent citizens as patrons, Shri Kanshi Ram Aggarwal as chairman, Hakim Vishwa Nath as vice-chairman and shri Inderjit Gupta Advocate as Secretary was constituted which functioned extremely well. By the end of January or first week of February 1926. Sh. Chandar Sheikhar and S. Bagat Singh came to see the functioning of the Ashram. They were highly pleased with its successful functioning and after discussion, they selected for special training about which they gave instructions to Swami Ji and left.

Their Azad and S. Bhagat Singh visits became frequently. They used to bring arms etc. and store them here in the custody of Swami Ji without the knowledge of any other person. Soon a sort of political awakening was left in the youngs men and a few of them started thinking of taking active part in the freedom struggle. This was no doubt a miracle as people in general in the state were totally indifferent to the movement and due to strict instructions by the rulers, they could not display and political fervour, enthusiasm or tendency openly. The ashram became an important media for achieving the desired objects and felt proud of it.

Side by side Swami Ji started discourses in religion, political and character building besides providing literature in Hindi and English relating to the historical of Lord Rama Raj will be established not from the seat of power but from the seat of Dharma. He believes that to reform the society. The heroic deeds of Rana Partap, Chatterpati Shivaji. Mughal empire Aurangzeb's durbar to sent Shivaji and was imprisoned from here, he made his dramatic escape. After his daring return from Agra, Shivaji conquered almost all the forts which he had surrendered to the Mughals. He celebrated his coronation in 1674 and shortly, thereafter made a great expedition into Southern states of India, the founder of the Maratha Hindu



Empire of India. Shivaji died in 1680 at the age of 53 years.

This the background to created a lot of interest in the public particularly the younger elements and the students and the Ashram became very popular Swami Ji became an commanded great respect became an important personality and recommended great respect.

Shri Inderjit Advocate to utter surprise after sometime a responsible Police Officer living neighborhood and working in the Intelligence Department told his father that his activities were being minutely watched by the government and may be put to some trouble sooner or later. He understood their pleasure and resentment and assured them that there was nothing objectionable. Shri Inderjit was plainly gave them a picture of the Ashram and respectfully asserted that being secretary of the committee.

When in the month of May 1926, Chandra Sheikhar to visit and sought his advise so far as intelligence reports were concerned. After some consultation with Swami Ji, he advised to Inderjit Gupta to join the college in the coming session so that the suspicion attaching to his whole-time activities in the Ashram may allay the intelligences and also pacify his parents. He agreed to his suggestion and in June 1926 to joined I<sup>st</sup> year class in P.W. College Jammu and took up Science subject (Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics). For giving the apparent impression of taking keen interest in the college activities.

Swami Ji started teaching few selected, the art of manufacturing important Ayurvedic medicines used for curing diseases and for body building. The regular Ayurvedic class Swami Ji had fake, degree which could be used for his purpose. People responded quickly and Swami Ji's task also became easier and smooth.

### The Martyrs of Mother India

*Ashfaq*

Pandit Ram Parsad Bismil was a member of Arya Saraj. He believed in a superiority of Hindu Dharam and was engaged in the conversion of people to Hinduism. Ashfaqulla Khan was a staunch and devout Muslim was a regular readers of Quran. Ram Parshad did not believe Ashifaq in the first meeting Ashifaq and Ram Parsad's brother were classmates. With the help the two became friends and lived revolutionary lives. The revolutionaries did not believe in Gandhi Ji and his creed. They wanted to use force and violence to drive away Britishers. The people of Varansi became a centre of revolutionaries and they formed Hindustan Republic Association to win freedom by armed revolution. Ram Prasad became the chief organizer of Shalajahanpur wing. This party was in need of money for purchase of arms. Initially they started some villages but they could collect very small money in villages.

### Kokari Case

No and Down Train from Shalajahanpur to Lukhnaw of approaching Kokari on August 9, 1925. On of the revolutionaries pulled the chain, the train stopped. Ashfaqulla Khan got off from the train with his companies Ram Parsad, Chandra Sheikhar Azad, Daya Krishan Gardish of Jammu, Sehindra Bakshi and Rajendra Lahari. The government treasure was broken and money to in custody and fed away. Some time that Ram Parsad, Ashfaqulla, Daya Krishan gardish, Sehindra Bakshi, Rajindra Bakshi etc were arrested.

Ashfaq was an embodiment of love for the motherland, courage steadfastness and sincerity. His life is much read. On December 19, 1927 with the rising of the sun the jail authorities were making preparations to put on end to the physical body of the great revolutionary patriot of India. The chief Jailor of Fazabál jail inspected the rope and the sand bags and



called out to his subordinates "Bring the convict here" the brave Ashfaq was waiting for this call and asked cheerfully, "is every thing ready." Asfaq was reading Quran and closed the holy book and put in under his arm stood up "smilingly and Venda Matram". He walked upright though in chains and stood firmly facing the post. When they removed the chains, he put forwards him and kissed it. He said "my hands are not soiled (motherland) with murder of a man God will give me justice. Then he prayed in ringing tones— La ilah Mohammad ur Raossol Allah"

The noose down his neck. The lever was pressed and he went down the pit below. He joined the brave immoral heroes of Bharat Mata. Ram Prasad was also hanged down and his a slogan of "Venda Matram" and Ram.

This life of service and sacrifice supreme will always remind the Indians their duty towards motherland. It is high time that the present day so called leaders of the nation read the biographies of these martyrs who freed India so that they also a lesson of patriotism.

### Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh

The party now entrusted S. Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt to throw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly was session in Delhi in order to demonstrate to the alien rulers the utter disgust and disaffection of the Indian against their autocratic rule. On April 8, 1929, they throw a bomb when the Central Assembly was in Session, and later offered themselves for arrest shouting "Inquilab Zindabad (Long live resolution). Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt were arrested, and later B.K. Dutt was hunger strike in the jail and 64 days was died. Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukhdev of Jammu were tried and sentenced death.

Mahatma Gandhi raised the question of the death sentence of Bhagat Singh etc. with Mr. Lord Arvin Viceroy in February-March of 1931. The Viceroy did not agree to commute the death sentence before the final of the historic Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931. Mahatma Gandhi it could have made it a condition of settlement, but he did not, Gandhi Ji felt it was not in the interest of the nation.

In the history of the Indian National Congress vol. I on page 442. Dr. P. Sitaramya writes that the "leader" went to the extent of saying to the Viceroy "if the boys should be hanged, they had better be, hanged before the Congress (Karachi) session than after it."

Gandhi Ji also refused to cooperate with the important leaders for raising a memorial to those three martyrs after their executions. When the All India Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukhdev Memorial Committee Lahore, approached Gandhi Ji to help raise a memorial erected in honour of anybody undoubtedly means that memorial would copy the deeds of those in whole memory they create the memorials. "It is also an invitation to prosperity to copy such deeds. I am, therefore, unable to identity myself in any way with the memorial."

S. Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukhdev were tried, and hanged in Lahore Central Jail on March 23, 1931 at about 7:30 in the evening. Their corpses were not handed over to their relatives but were cremated by the police at the dead of night on the banks of the river. Sutlej near Ferozepur.

S. Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev were class students colleague. Sukhdev Was Chanakya a brain with Bhagat Singh. On Feb. 27, 1931 at Alfrid Park Allahabad 9:00 a.m. was by the police at a great Chandra Sheikhar Azad. He fired 39 bullets Moderaz pistol and one bullet was shot on his self and thus martyred and to the end of his revolutionaries colleagues.

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